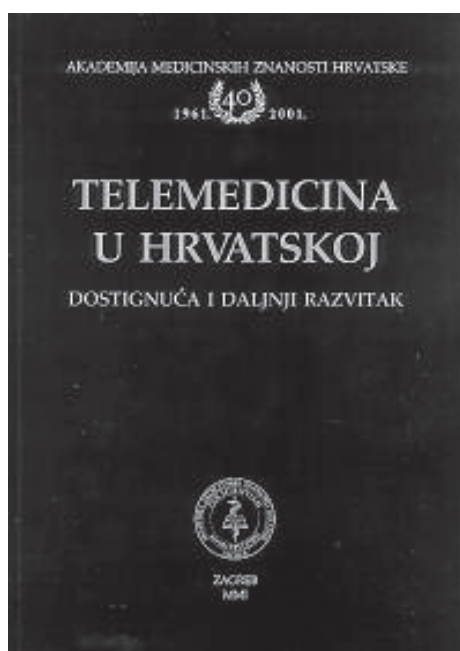


BOOK REVIEWS



TELEMEDICINA U HRVATSKOJ/TELEMEDICINE IN CROATIA, by Asim Kurjak and Branimir Richter, eds. Academy of Medical Sciences of Croatia, Zagreb, 2001
ISBN 953-6868-04-0

We are witnessing a widespread use of computers, information technology, and internet. It is not unusual that computerization is also ever more widely used in medicine. Telemedicine, which could be defined as medicine at distance, or use of computers and computer networks to enable communication between two or more professionals involved in providing medical care, is one of the most promising and revolutionary techniques currently employed in ever growing fields of medicine. The book appearance has perfect timing, as a number of telemedicine projects and pilot projects have just been developing in Croatia. The Academy of Medical Sciences of Croatia has gathered a multidisciplinary team of prominent scientists from various fields of science who have

contributed their views on the current development of telemedicine in Croatia.

The book is divided in three chapters: General Approach; Actual Experience in Croatia and in the World; and Prospects for the Future. The first chapter, General Approach, contains contributions dealing with information, communication and knowledge. The definition, possibilities and role of telemedicine in Croatian information technology are presented, along with a short history of development of telemedicine in Croatia. Also, technical aspects of telemedicine, telematic infrastructure in Croatia, organization and development of telemedicine projects in Croatia, telemedicine and health care in integration in Croatia, health information and communication technology, and implementation strategy in Croatia are discussed.

These general considerations are followed by the second chapter, Actual Experience in Croatia and in the World, bringing papers on recent developments in telemedicine projects in Croatia, from virtual polyclinic for islands and virtual health center through teleradiology, telesurgery and teleneurosurgery, real time transfer of live video image and tele 3-D computer assisted ENT surgery, telematics in gynecology and perinatology, telecardiology and telegastroenterology, CroDiabNet – diabetes care monitoring system, teleneurology, telemedicine in psychiatry, telepathology, telelaboratory, telematics in public health, and telemedicine in health tourism in Croatia. All these papers show that telemedicine has been quite well developed in Croatia, and that in many fields of medicine it keeps pace with the latest developments in the world.

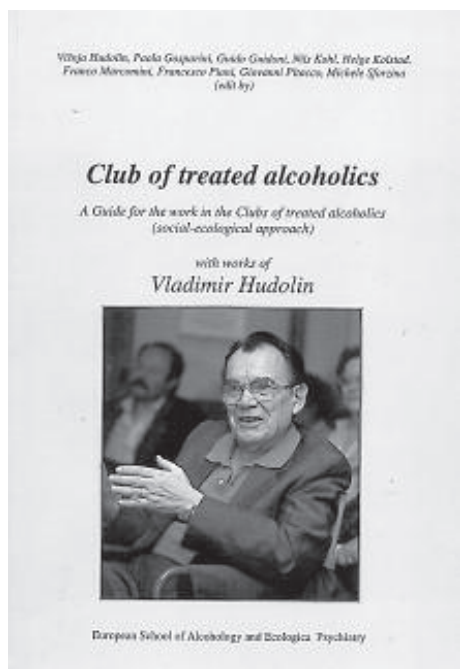
The last chapter, Prospects for the Future, contains papers on the possible future developments, ranging from the use of internet and intranet in hospitals, telematics in medical and health education, through Croatian biomedical information system. The last chapters deal with ethics issues and privacy in telemedicine, possible threats and perils of widespread use of telemedicine, pending access of unauthorized persons to classified patient information,

responsibility concerning unauthorized access, possible changes in the physician – patient relationship, medical data privacy, and telemedicine data copyright.

In spite of all obstacles, telemedicine represents the probable future development in medicine and medical sciences, and we are witnessing an ever growing use of computer and communication technology in many fields of human activities. Medicine is also involved in this development, and the project of telemedicine is rapidly ex-

panding in Croatia. Many have recognized the vast possibilities of telemedicine, so it has already been used in many ways in almost all fields of medicine, as also seen from this book. The book will be of great help to medical professionals to be engaged in telemedicine now or in the days to come. As judged from the experience acquired to date, it will soon involve every medical professional.

Zlatko Trkanjec



CLUB OF TREATED ALCOHOLICS – A GUIDE FOR THE WORK IN THE CLUBS OF TREATED ALCOHOLICS (SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL APPROACH) WITH WORKS OF VLADIMIR HUDOLIN, Višnja Hudolin, Paolo Gosparini, Guido Guidoni, Nils Kohl, Helge Kolstad, Franco Marcomini, Francesco Piani, Giovanni Pitacco and Michele Sforzina, eds. European School of Alcoholology and Ecological Psychiatry, Trieste, 2001

This book divided into several chapters begins with introductory remarks, followed by the history of alcoholism programs. The experience with alcoholism related problems acquired before the establishment of clubs of treated alcoholics in Croatia and Italy is briefly presented. Development of a network of clubs of treated alcoholics since 1964 is described in more detail, from the beginning of such clubs in Croatia and former Yugoslavia and establishment of the first such club in Italy. The development and present situation in the clubs in Croatia are discussed, including the difficulties faced during and after the war in Croatia. The development of clubs in Italy since the first club in Trieste in 1979, introduction of territorial programs in Friuli – Venezia Giulia, and present situation in Italian clubs are presented in detail. The next chapter describes the development of the clubs of treated alcoholics in different countries and their present situation. The great role of the European School of Alcoholology and Ecological Psychia-

try is emphasized, as it has provided the necessary educational and training frame for persons working at such clubs. The experience of clubs from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Ecuador, Greece, Macedonia, Montenegro, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Russia, Scandinavian countries, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland is presented.

The next chapter, The Manual, illustrates the socio-ecologic system in the programs for alcoholism related problems, basic training, continuous updating and specialization in the socio-ecologic system, anthropologic spirituality, and clubs of treated alcoholics in special situations as well as cooperation between the clubs, the public and private organizations. In the next chapter, Associations of the Clubs of Treated Alcoholics from Croatia and Italy are described, and the role of Associations and difficulties encountered in their activities are discussed. The last chapters of the book deal with the meetings in the socio-ecologic systems, and with evaluative researches.

Reading this book, we can once again see the greatness of Vladimir Hudolin's brilliant ideas about the treatment of alcoholics and alcohol related problems through clubs of treated alcoholics. After foundation of the first club of treated alcoholics in Maksimir, a part of Zagreb, in autumn 1964, numerous clubs were organized all over Croatia, followed by their foundation in the region. In 1979, the first Italian club was founded in Trieste, followed by many more in Italy. Looking at the list of countries that adopted Hudolin's concept of clubs of treated alcoholics, which includes Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Ecuador, Greece, Macedonia, Montenegro, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Russia, Scandinavian countries, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland, it becomes obvious that this outstanding concept has really spread all over the world in the last decades. It is believed that the wide acceptance and duration of one's idea verifies its importance. If it is true, then Hudolin's concept of clubs of treated alcoholics has really proved successful.

The fact that more than a hundred of recognized experts and authors from various countries and continents gathered to contribute to this book emphasizes the great value and highly significant role of Vladimir Hudolin's work, and the global importance of his ideas. This book is essential for all those working with alcoholics, for those engaged in the field of social psychiatry, and for everyone who wants to know more about the global impact of Vladimir Hudolin's work. The editors state they will publish the next edition of the manual, and we are looking forward to it indeed.